

REMARKS

This Amendment and accompanying Request for Continued Examination are submitted in response to the final Office Action mailed on March 31, 2003. The Office Action rejects Claims 16-19 and 25-43. Claims 20-24 have been withdrawn to a non-elected invention. Applicants have canceled these claims without prejudice or disclaimer, reserving the right to file these claims as a divisional application.

Claims 16-19, 25-39, and 41-43 stand rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,433,960 to *Meyers* and claim 40 stands rejected as being obvious in view of *Meyers* and U.S. Patent No. 5,948,430 to *Zerbe*. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as *Meyers* and *Zerbe*, either alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in the present claims.

Neither *Meyers* nor *Zerbe* teaches or suggests a stand alone edible film as recited in the present claims. Conversely, *Meyers* discloses a thin coating that is supported by a gum piece surface. *Meyers*, col. 6 line 56 through col. 7 line 7. Similarly, *Zerbe* fails to teach or suggest a stand alone film as the *Zerbe* film must be supported by a surface allowing an evenly spread coating. *Zerbe*, col. 3 lines 50-60.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of the claims as being anticipated or obvious be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of their patent application and earnestly solicit an early allowance of same.

Respectfully submitted,

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